

## Speak up & be heard

CONSUMER REGISTER lists summaries of major consumer proposals before Federal agencies. If you wish to submit written comments, include your name & address, state the name & *Federal Register* citation of the proposal on which you are commenting and explain your views briefly & clearly.

## Cosmetics & medicines on planes

A new Federal Aviation Administration regulation went into effect July 17 to allow passengers to carry small amounts of cosmetics & medicines on airplanes even though the articles may be flammable.

The new FAA regulation is in line with common practice—passengers already take aerosol cans of shaving cream, deodorant, hair spray, antiseptic spray and other flammable products on board.

Formerly FAA regulations allowed passengers to carry products that contained compressed gases (such as products in aerosol cans) or flammable liquids (such as perfume, other cosmetics & some medicines that contain alcohol) only if they put the articles in special packages labeled as dangerous. The new regulation allows such products on board in quantities of 16 ounces or less with a 32 ounce limit per passenger.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 17, page 12062.

## Flood insurance

Reductions in the cost of subsidized flood insurance under a Housing & Urban Development Dept. program went into effect July 10.

The new lower rates were established to encourage more consumers to purchase flood insurance. Under the subsidized program, \$10,000 worth of flood insurance on a residential building, which previously cost a consumer \$40 a year, will now be \$25 a year.

The National Flood Insurance Program was established by Congress in 1968 to subsidize the cost of flood insurance for persons who live in flood-prone areas. Communities that wanted to take advantage of the program were required to adopt land use and control measures to reduce loss of life & property in flooding.

The flood insurance is now available in some 1,200 communities. But many persons in flood-prone communities failed to buy the insurance because they found the premiums too high.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 1, page 13098.

## Home modernization

New Federal Home Loan Bank Board regulations going into effect Aug. 1 will govern loans for buying home equipment.

The regulations will permit Federal savings and loan associations to make loans for home modernization without the previous requirement of security.

The regulations authorize home equipping loans for major home appliances and for built-in equipment. Each loan made under the new regulation will be subject to a \$5,000 ceiling. The regulations specify that home equip-

ping loans will have to be repaid in regular installments within a period of 10 years and 32 days.

Some items that might be bought with an equipping loan include: central or window air conditioning; burglar or fire alarm systems; kitchen cabinets; wall-to-wall carpeting; vacuum cleaners; dishwashers and clothes washing machines; garbage disposals; doors; draperies; fans; freezers; hot water heaters; shutters; storm windows; workshop equipment.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 24, page 12485.

## Motorcycle brakes

Transportation Dept. has postponed the effective date of its new standard for motorcycle brake systems from Sept. 1, 1973, to Jan. 1, 1974.

The standard was designed to insure safe motorcycle braking performance in emergencies. Under the standard, motorcycles will have to pass a series of road tests, stopping within specified distances at various speeds & demonstrating acceptable stopping performance after the brakes have been exposed to water.

The effective date was postponed by 4 months at the request of a manufacturers' trade association to give extra time for design changes that the new standard may require.

Details—CONSUMER REGISTER: April 15; *Federal Register*: June 16, page 11973.

## Cottage cheese

Manufacturers will be allowed to use "safe and suitable" defoaming agents in creamed cottage cheese under a new Food & Drug Administration regulation which goes into effect Aug. 16.

At present, the best known defoaming agents considered both "safe and suitable" under FDA regulations are the mono- & di-glycerides.

The new regulation is designed to eliminate the formation of foam in cottage cheese. Foam detracts from the product's appearance & makes it difficult to fill containers with the proper amount of cheese.

There were 37 comments on the regulation when it was proposed. FDA officials said that 2 comments favored the proposal; 17 misinterpreted it & 18 expressed general opposition to adding chemicals to foods. FDA said it went ahead with the regulation because those opposing it did not submit data to contradict the data in support of the use of defoaming agents in creamed cottage cheese.

Under the regulation, the names of defoaming ingredients will have to be declared on the label and quantities used will be limited to what is safe.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 17, page 12064.

## Ozone

Aug. 26 is deadline for comments on a Food & Drug Administration proposal designed to reduce the amount of human exposure to ozone.

Ozone is a slightly blueish gas, a form of oxygen. When it accumulates in the air, persons who inhale large quantities may suffer lung injury. Ozone can also affect the central nervous system, the heart and vision.

FDA officials say that an increasing number of products, a few of them used in homes—such as certain home air purifiers—may emit the ozone gas.

The FDA proposal would in effect ban products that

- Emit more than a small amount of ozone (more than 0.05 parts per million by volume of air circulating through the device) or cause more than a minimum accumulation of the gas;

- Are used in hospitals, emitting the gas into the air with the alleged purpose of deodorizing. FDA officials said that ozone is only effective as a germicide at very high and dangerous levels;

- Do not show on labeling the maximum amount of ozone which may be emitted and the smallest area in which the product can be safely used.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 27, page 12644. Send comments to the Hearing Clerk, Health, Education & Welfare Dept., 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

## Mercury in cosmetics

Aug. 29 is deadline for comments on a Food & Drug Administration proposal aimed at ridding cosmetics of harmful amounts of mercury.

FDA officials say that mercury compounds as active ingredients may be found in certain skin bleaching or facial creams & lotions. Mercury compounds have also been widely used as preservatives in a number of cosmetics, including certain hand & body creams & lotions; hair shampoos, hair rinses, hair straighteners, hair colorings; bath oils, bubble bath; makeup; antiperspirants & deodorants.

There is evidence that prolonged use of mercury-containing products may result in mercury poisoning with symptoms such as numbness or aching extremities, weakness, nervousness & difficulties in speech, vision or hearing.

The FDA proposal would ban any cosmetic containing mercury unless there is no more than a "trace" of the toxic element. Eye makeups, however, would be excepted from the proposed ban & would be permitted to contain no more than 50 parts per million of mercury. FDA officials say that there may not be a safe nonmercurial preservative available for use in eye makeup. Mercury compounds help prevent certain types of contamination of eye cosmetics thus avoiding eye infections that may cause blindness.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 30, page 12967. Send

comments to the Hearing Clerk, Health, Education & Welfare Dept., Room 6-88, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

## Food coloring

Sept. 2 is deadline for comments on a Food & Drug Administration proposal to restrict the use of the common coloring additive known as Red No. 2, which is used in many foods, beverages & some cosmetics.

The FDA restrictions were proposed after tests with laboratory animals indicated that the color additive may affect reproduction. Some of the tests indicated that injections of Red No. 2 caused early fetal deaths in rats. However, researchers for National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council concluded that further tests are necessary but restrictions on the use of Red No. 2 are "a premature and unnecessary measure at this time." FDA has proposed restrictions despite the NAS-NRC report.

Under the FDA proposal, use of the color additive would be cut by more than 30% in most foods & by about 50% in many beverages. The proposal would restrict the use of Red No. 2 in foods & beverages to 30 parts per million. In lipsticks, it could be used at levels up to 1,000 parts in a million.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 4, page 13181. Send comments to the Hearing Clerk, Health, Education & Welfare Dept., Room 6-88, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

## Child-proof packages

Sept. 16 is deadline for comments on a Food & Drug Administration proposal to provide 2 exemptions from agency regulations that go into effect later this year & will require special child-proof packages for products that contain aspirin & for certain narcotic drugs.

Under the proposal, drugs for animals & drugs not taken orally will be exempted from the packaging rules. FDA proposed the exemptions in response to petitions from 4 drug companies.

FDA aspirin packaging regulations go into effect Aug. 14 and will require packages for aspirin and products containing aspirin to be designed so that they are difficult for children to open. Manufacturers must select packages that a sample of 200 children under 5 cannot open 85% of the time but a panel of adults can open 90% of the time. After Oct. 24, the same packaging will be required for narcotic drugs now controlled under the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention & Control Act of 1970. Controlled drugs include barbituates, amphetamines & drugs that contain large amounts of codeine.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 18, page 14238. Send comments to the Hearing Clerk, Health, Education & Welfare Dept., Room 6-88, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

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